

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-20 are now present in the application. Claims 1, 6, 10, and 13-20 have been amended. Claims 1, 6 and 15 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has provided an initiated copy of the PTO-1449 attached to the Information Disclosure Statement dated July 25, 2000.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 11-13, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as including subject matter not contained in the specification, and claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph for lack of enablement.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 10-13, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctively claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In response, claims 1, 10, and 17 are amended herein to address each of the issues pointed out by the Examiner. In addition, claims 11, 12, and 14-20 are amended herein merely to correct minor informalities.

Applicants believe that these amendments are sufficient to overcome the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), 102(a), and §103(a)

Claims 6-7, 14, 16, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mavinkurve (US 5,275,591).

Claims 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Hasegawa (WO 98/25561).

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Correa et al. (US 5,490,847).

Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mavinkurve, and further in view of Fung et al. (US 5,423,786).

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mavinkurve.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amendments to Independent Claim 6

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the present application, independent claim 6 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a sanitary napkin including each of the wing portions being formed by laminating an absorptive sheet to at least one other sheet, the absorptive sheet and the at least one other sheet being provided under said elongate absorbent body and extending outwardly on the right and left sides thereof, the absorptive sheet and the at least one other sheet being bonded to each other with an adhesive agent over substantially an entirety thereof except for non-coated areas of a predetermined width formed on the wing portions along opposite side edges of the absorbent body.

The novel limitations set forth in independent claim 6, as amended herein, are clearly shown in Figs. 5 and 6, which illustrate each of the wing portions 3b is formed by laminating an absorptive sheet 32 to at least one other sheet 31, the absorptive sheet 32 and the at least one other sheet 31 being provided under the elongate absorbent body 2 and extending outwardly on the right and left sides thereof, the absorptive sheet 32 and the at least one other sheet 31 being bonded to each other with an adhesive agent 34 over substantially an entirety thereof except

for non-coated areas 35 of a predetermined width formed on the wing portions along opposite side edges of the absorbent body 2.

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 6 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Mavinkurve and Hasegawa.

Mavinkurve merely discloses flaps 20, 22 each containing absorptive tissue in compartments that are separated from the elongate absorbent body and from each other by sealing means 10. Hasegawa merely discloses flaps 24, 25 having no absorbent material at all.

Thus, these documents fail to teach or suggest an absorptive sheet being provided under the elongate absorbent body 2 and extending outwardly on the right and left sides thereof. Further, Mavinkurve and Hasegawa fail to teach or suggest an absorptive sheet and another sheet being bonded to each other with an adhesive agent over substantially an entirety thereof except for non-coated areas of a predetermined width formed on the wing portions along opposite side edges of the absorbent body.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 6 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Mavinkurve, and Hasegawa, for the reasons explained above. Accordingly, claim 6, and claims 7-10 and 14 depending therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of these claims are respectfully requested.

Amendments to Independent Claim 15

Independent claim 15 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a sanitary napkin, wherein each of the rear wing portions includes a liquid-retentive wing portion absorbent core extending substantially an entire width of the sanitary napkin in partial overlapping relationship with the elongate absorbent body.

The novel limitations set forth in independent claim 15, as amended herein, are clearly shown in Fig. 2, which illustrates rear wing portions 3b includes a liquid-retentive wing portion absorbent core 32 extending substantially an entire width of the sanitary napkin 1 in partial overlapping relationship with the elongate absorbent body 2.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 15 are not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Correa et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that Correa et al. merely disclose foam strips 130 located in cuffs 70, 80 extending along a fraction of the length of the sanitary napkin. As can be seen in Figs. 1 and 2, strips 130 do not extend substantially an entire width of the absorbent article as asserted by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 15 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Correa et al., for the reasons explained above. Thus, claim 15, and claims 16-20 depending therefrom, are believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims are respectfully requested.

Since claims 18 and 19, as amended herein, depend from allowable claim 15, the rejections of claims 18 and 19, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are now moot.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

All claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Carl T. Thomsen, Registration No. 50,786 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the application by this Amendment.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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